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S.C. celebrates as anti-gay marriage efforts die in Legislature

State is ninth to reject attempt to write discrimination into Constitution

by Lina Roberts

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Despite feverish last-minute efforts, the S.C. state legislature ended its regular session on Friday, June 4 without approving proposed legislation that sought to prohibit not only the recognition of same-sex marriages performed in any other jurisdiction but void “any public act, record, or judicial proceeding” that extends benefits to “non-marital relationships” such as domestic partnerships or civil unions. One of these so-called “Super DOMA” (*Defense of Marriage Act*) bills passed the state House of Representatives on Mar. 17 by 93 to 7, but stalled in the Senate.

“We are celebrating,” announced Johanna Hayes, the director of South Carolina’s Lesbian + Gay Business Guild. “Lots of things came together to make this happen. People in S.C. worked together writ-

ing letters and cards and making phone calls to their representatives and senators.

“GLBT people stepped out like never before talking to family and friends about what it is really like being gay. This courageous step helped mobilize and build straight friends and allies in our fight, many of whom were, prior to this, silent in their support. Organizations all across the state worked together mobilizing their members in these efforts.”

“This is a major victory for the nation’s lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community,” said Matt Foreman, NGLTF’s executive director. “It shows that determined leaders can win against incredible odds. Every gay American is in debt to Linda Ketner and Warren Redman-Gress of the Alliance For Full Acceptance (AFFA), the South Carolina Equality Coalition and the South Carolina Gay & Lesbian Pride Movement for their courage and tenacity.”

Hayes was quick to confirm the number of individuals, activists, private citizens and



‘This makes S.C. the only southern state with no anti-gay legislation passing this year so far,’ days SCBG Director Johanna Hayes.

politicians that stepped out on behalf of the LGBT community.

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Jury says gay Rock Hill man not guilty in partner’s death

Richard Hinton was reportedly abused frequently during his two year relationship with Tyrone Hammonds

A York County jury found Richard Lee Hinton not guilty of murder May 27 for the October stabbing death of Tyrone Hammonds.



Free man: Richard Hinton was released May 27.

Hinton, 38, testified he stabbed Hammonds, who he acknowledged as his romantic partner, in self-defense after Hammonds attacked him with his fists and a knife.

Witnesses and friends indicated during the proceedings that Hinton was a frequent victim of Hammonds’s violent outbursts. Hinton had apparently never fought back until the incidents leading to Hammonds’s death.

Both the defense and prosecutors agreed it was Hammonds who chased Hinton down Pond St., in Rock Hill on Oct. 5, but prosecutors argued in court Hinton stabbed Hammonds then fled afterward to avoid arrest.

see **ROCK** on 6

LGBT Community reacts to Reagan’s death

Democrats and liberals point to his inactivity on AIDS while Log Cabin Republicans praise his efforts with 1977 anti-gay ‘Briggs Initiative’

by Donald Miller

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — As America mourned Ronald Reagan, gay activists struck a discordant note, lamenting his alleged insensitivity to AIDS when it struck devastatingly during his presidency.

Ironically, they noted, Reagan, 93, died of Alzheimer’s disease on the 21st anniversary of the first official report of what would only later be called the AIDS virus.

The report was issued on June 5, 1981 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

“That is ironic. It certainly will forever tie those two issues together,” said Jeffrey Prang, a city councillor in West Hollywood, a gay-dominated Los Angeles-area city.

Jon Beaupre, a gay journalist and Los Angeles radio talk show host who is HIV-positive, said Reagan’s death “brought mixed feelings”.

“The fact that he reflected the values of a lot of people was unmistakable. Clearly, Ronald Reagan was a man of principle and integrity,” the 51-year old said. “But he did as much as any man on the planet to hold back social progress for lesbians and gay men.



Former President Ronald Reagan in 1984.

“We wonder today how far we would be in solving the AIDS crisis if Reagan had both recognized the scope of the tragedy and had more respect for the plight of gay men who were dying by the thousands from AIDS,” he said.

“I have a feeling that an awful lot of gay people are going to be cheering, that ‘Ding-dong! The Wicked Witch is Dead,’” he said.

Reagan, president from 1981 to 1989, came under intense fire from gay activists in

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